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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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1,426 Unbelted Motorists Cited In Week 1 of “Click It or Ticket”
Registration climbing for chance to win race tickets

Dover - More than 14-hundred unbelted motorists felt the HEAT last week as Delaware law enforcement officers stepped up enforcement of the state’s seat belt laws. In the first week of enforcement for Delaware’s *Click It or Ticket* campaign officers from State, county and municipal law enforcement agencies issued 1,426 citations statewide for seat belt violations.

The violations were found as officers conducted 14 Traffic Safety checkpoints and 176 Traffic Safety patrols. A citation means an officer discovered that either a driver or one or more passengers were unrestrained in the vehicle. The fine for violating the state’s seat belt law is a \$25.00 fine plus court processing fees for a total fine of \$40.00 or more.

Over the last week, officers have also been rewarding motorists for responsible seat belt behavior. Drivers or passengers “caught” wearing their seat belt during the “Click It or Ticket” enforcement period, which in Delaware runs through May 28th, are presented with a coupon giving them a chance to register online for tickets to the June 3rd NASCAR NEXTEL Cup Series race at Dover International Speedway. As of this morning, 100 individuals have registered for the coveted tickets. For more information on this initiative visit www.ohs.delaware.gov and after clicking on the “Click It or Ticket” icon, hit the link labeled “Click it FOR Tickets.”

In addition to the 1,426 seat belt citations issued last week, officers also issued 35 citations for child restraint violations, apprehended 20 wanted individuals, made 2 DUI arrests, 8 drug arrests, and issued 493 citations for other traffic violations. Several drug charges were also

issued after troopers from Delaware State Police Troop 6 pulled over one vehicle for a passenger seat belt violation. Troopers smelled the odor of marijuana and after a search discovered drugs, a digital scale and thousands of dollars in cash in the car.

In the coming week, officers from 32 participating State, municipal, county and military police agencies will continue with enhanced seat belt enforcement activities. They are now joined by law enforcement agencies nationwide.

Although seat belt use in Delaware is at an all time high of 86%, still 1 in every 7 Delawareans fails to regularly buckle up. The goal of *Click It or Ticket* is to save lives by increasing seat belt use statewide. Daily enforcement continues through Memorial Day and is supported both locally and nationally by frequent television and radio safety advertising. Enforcement information, our safety ads, copies of printed materials and pictures from *Click It or Ticket* checkpoints can be seen by visiting the OHS website.

Click It or Ticket is also the first of three major safety initiatives to be conducted under the Office of Highway Safety's new umbrella safety campaign, "120 Days of Summer HEAT" (Highway Enforcement of Aggressive Traffic). The Summer HEAT campaign is aimed at saving lives by cracking down on traffic violators. Traditionally the summer months are a peak time for traffic fatalities.

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